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# Fontenoy

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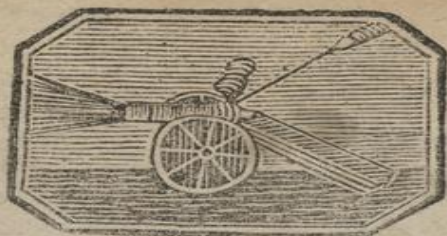
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## FONTENROY.

Thrice, at the huts of Fontenoy, the English column failed  
And twice the lines of St. Antoine the Dutch  
in vain assailed ;  
For town and slopes were guarded with fort  
and artillery,  
As vainly, through De Barri's wood the  
British soldiers burst—  
The French artillery drove them back,  
diminished, dispersed.  
The bloody Duke of Cumberland beheld with  
anxious eye,  
And ordered up his last reserve, his latest  
chance to try.  
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, how fast his  
gen'ral's ride,  
And mustering come his chosen troops, like  
clouds at eventide.  
Six thousand English veterans in stately  
column tread,  
Their cannon blaze in front, at flank, Lord  
Hay is at their head ;  
Steady they step a-down the slope—steady  
they climb the hill ;  
Steady they lead—steady they fire, moving  
right onward still,  
Betwixt the wood and Fontenoy, as through  
a furnace blast,  
Through rampart, trench, palisade, and  
bullets show'ring fast ;  
And on the open plain above they rose and  
kept their course,  
With ready fire and steadiness—that mock-  
ed at hostile force.  
Past Fontenoy, past Fontenoy, while thin-  
ner grew their ranks—  
They break, as broke the Zuyder Zee  
through Holland's ocean banks.  
More idly than the summer flies French  
tirailleurs rush round ;  
As stubble to the lava tide, French squad-  
rons strew the ground ;  
Bomb-shell, and grape, and round-shot tore  
still on they marched and fired,  
Fast as each volley grenadier and voltiguer  
retired.  
“Push on my household cavalry,” King  
Louis madly cried ;  
To death they rush, but rude their shock—  
not unavenged they died.  
On through the camp the column trod—  
King Louis turns his rein :  
“Not yet, my liege,” Saxe interposed, “the  
Irish troops remain ;”  
And Fontenoy, famed Fontenoy, had been  
a Waterloo,  
There were those exiles ready then, fresh,  
vehement, and true.  
“Lord Clare,” he says “you have your  
wish, there are your Saxon foes,”

The Marshal almost smiles to see, so fur-  
iously he goes  
How fierce the look those exiles wear,  
who're wont to be so gay,  
The treasured wrongs of fifty years are in  
their hearts to-day,  
The treaty broken, ere the ink wherewith  
'twas writ could dry,  
Their plundered homes, their ruined shrines  
their women's parting cry,  
Their priesthood hunted down like wolves,  
their country overthrown—  
Each looks as if revenge for all rested on  
him alone.  
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, nor ever yet  
elsewhere,  
Rushed on to fight a nobler band than these  
proud exiles were.  
O'Brien's voice is hoarse with joy, as halt-  
ing, he commands,  
“Fix bay'nets” “charge,” Like moun-  
tain storm rush on those fiery bands.  
Thin is the English column now, and faint  
their volleys grow,  
Yet must'ring all the strength they have,  
they make a gallant show.  
They dress their ranks upon the hill to face  
that battle-wind,  
Their bayonets the breakers' foam : like  
rocks, the men behind.  
One volley crashes from their line, when,  
through the surging smoke,  
With empty guns clutched in their hands,  
the headlong Irish broke.  
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, hark to that  
fierce huzzah,  
“Revenge! remember Limerick! dash  
down the Sassana !  
Like lions leaping on a fold, when mad with  
hunger's pang,  
Right up against the English line the Irish  
exiles sprang,  
Bright was their steel, 'tis bloody now, their  
guns are filled with gore ;  
Through shattered ranks, and severed files,  
and trampled flags they tore.  
The English strove with desp'rate strength,  
paused, rallied, staggered, fled—  
The green hill side is matted close with  
dying and with dead,  
Across the plain, and away passed on that  
hideous wrack,  
While cavalier and fantassin dash in upon  
their track.  
On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, like eagles in  
the sun,  
With bloody plumes the Irish stand—the  
field is fought and won.